

For Hazardous Waste...

There's No Place Like Home

Household drains and garbage cans usually aren't considered conduits for hazardous waste. But products as toxic as arsenic and as persistent as DDT are often poured down the kitchen sink or thrown out in the trash. This carelessness can cause serious problems.

Powerful chemical products for home use include drain cleaners, disinfectants, degreasers, pesticides, paints, etc. These products also are potentially hazardous wastes.

What is Household Hazardous Waste?

It is any material discarded from the home that may, due to its chemical nature, pose a threat to human or environmental health if handled improperly. It may be ignitable, corrosive, explosive, poisonous, or have other or a combination of dangerous properties. And it's difficult to control because it comes from diverse sources.

Industrial waste disposal is strictly regulated. Disposal of household hazardous waste is not, even though it may contain the same toxic substances.

How big is the problem?

Washington citizens tossed an estimated 14,700,000 pounds of household hazardous waste into local sanitary landfills in 1987.

Improper use and disposal of hazardous household products has caused poisoning, chemical burns, exposure to toxic fumes, contamination of ground water, fish kills, and explosions in sewers, garbage trucks, landfills and homes.

Small amounts of hazardous chemicals are widespread throughout our homes, garages, and storage sheds – often unsafely stored.

The Solution Begins at Home

Each person can help control household toxics. Purchasing power can be used to give industry the incentive to produce safer household products. Local governments can help provide hazardous waste management plans and provide public education. State government has grant and technical assistance programs for household hazardous waste projects and planning.

For more information, call 1-800-RECYCLE, and ask for your copy of Turning the Tide, a free brochure.

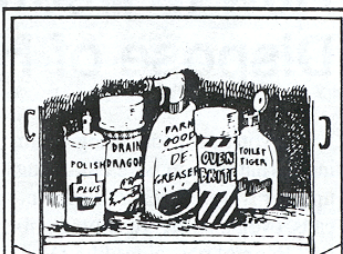
How to Identify a Hazardous Product

Federal law requires that hazardous products be labeled: "**Danger**," "**Warning**," or "**Caution**." Each word indicates the degree of a product's toxicity. "**Danger**" being the most toxic, "**Caution**" being the least. Toxicity is the capacity of a substance to cause damage to an organism.

Other words on a label like poison, corrosive, flammable, volatile, or caustic, help to determine the principal hazard of the product.

Labels rarely warn of long-term health hazards, and labeling requirements do not apply to most hobby products.

Inadequate as they are, labels do contain helpful information for many hazardous products. Knowing the meaning of signal words can help users make informed product and disposal choices.



Culprits in the Cupboard

Common Examples of Household Hazardous Waste

Paints and Solvents

Oil-based paints, paint thinners, paint strippers, boat bottom paints, varnishes, furnisher refinishers, metal polishes.

Auto Care Products

Engine cleaner, used motor oil, tar remover, antifreeze, gasoline.

Cleaners

Bleach, degreasers, spot removers, rug cleaners, disinfectants, toilet cleaners, oven cleaners, drain cleaners, septic tank cleaners.

Pesticides

Pest strips, insect repellant, flea powder, ant and roach powder, rat poison, slug bait, moth balls, weed killers, wood preservatives.

Miscellaneous items

Dyes, lighter fluids, pool chemicals, photo chemicals, chemistry sets, old fire extinguishers, old medicines.



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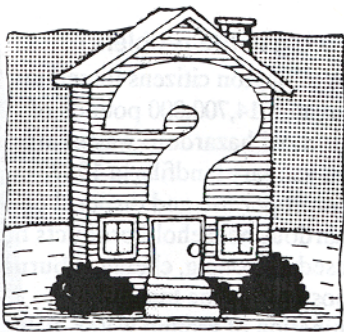
How to Reduce, Recycle, and Safely Dispose of Household Hazardous Wastes

Are you ready for spring cleaning? What do you have cluttering up your storage areas? Old paint cans, oven cleaner, furniture polish? Banned pesticides like DDT or Silvex that shouldn't be used?

If you wonder whether to bury them, throw them into the trash, pour them down the drain, or hope they'll just go away, you are not alone. Hundreds of citizens in Washington call Ecology's Recycle Hotline weekly with questions on proper disposal. Your county health department, local WSU Coop extension office, and library are other good sources for help.

The next step is to find ways to reduce and recycle household wastes. To reduce the amount of toxic trash, use up the product according to label directions. Any banned products should be taken to your local collection day event. Keep things in their original containers.

The best way to prevent hazardous wastes is to buy and use less hazardous products. For example, instead of using slug poison, trap slugs in shallow pans filled with beer. Other



safer substitutes that work well are listed on this page.

Another way to help keep the environment clean is to recycle used motor oil, auto batteries, and other material. Call the Recycle Hotline, 1-800-RECYCLE, for up-to-date information.

Some wastes like banned pesticides, paints containing lead, and others require special disposal. Seventeen Washington counties have held special collections for these nasties, many on a regular basis. For schedules, contact your local health department or call 1-800-RECYCLE. The Hotline can also provide information on safer alternatives.

Safety Tips for Hazardous Products

1. Read product labels, follow directions and warnings.
2. Keep unused material in the original containers, securely stored.
3. Do not overuse products. Twice as much won't work twice as well.
4. Never mix products – a dangerous reaction could occur.
5. Never mix wastes – it could create a difficult disposal problem.
6. Don't use old hazardous products: they may contain dangerous chemicals that have been banned.
7. Wear protective equipment such as goggles, gloves, or respirators with proper cartridges when using hazardous material. Consult your telephone directory under "safety equipment" for stores that carry safety gear.
8. Avoid breathing mists or vapors. If possible, work outdoors. If you must work inside, use plenty of ventilation.
9. If pregnant, avoid exposure to all toxic chemicals. Many household products are untested for their effects on the unborn.

Safer Substitutes for Hazardous Products

Coffee pot stains
vinegar solution

Copper cleaner
lemon juice and salt

Drain cleaner
Pour ½ cup of baking soda into drain, followed by ½ cup of vinegar. A palmful of salt can be added to kitchen drain to cut through grease. In a half hour, pour some boiling water down the drain. (To make glass cleaner, mix 1 to 2 cup white vinegar into a quart of warm water.)

Flies
use fly swatters or flypaper

Furniture polish
1 tablespoon lemon oil in 1 pint mineral oil

Insects on plants
spray soapy water on leaves, then rinse

Oil stain remover
rub white chalk into stain before laundering

Oven cleaner
Spray water, then sprinkle on baking soda. Rub gently with fine steel wool for tough spots

Scouring powder
Baking soda

Spot remover
Clean spots immediately with club soda

Remember: Be Cautious!